Failing to read

Globally, fewer than 6 out of 10 children can read by the end of primary.

Disparities in reading

By gender:

Boys are 10% less likely than girls to acquire foundational reading skills.

By attendance:

Out-of-school children are 50% less likely to acquire foundational reading skills than those in school.

By wealth:

The poorest students are 40% less likely to acquire foundational reading skills than the richest.

Disparities among countries

The richest children in poorer countries have lower levels of reading proficiency than the poorest children in richer countries.

Reading disparities exacerbated by the digital divide

The digital divide risks widening the already striking skills gap.

Source: UNICEF calculation based on UIS, PIRLS, PASEC, SEA-PLM and MICS-FLS data (01 May 2021)